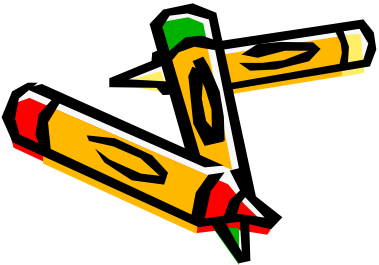




RECESS BEFORE LUNCH

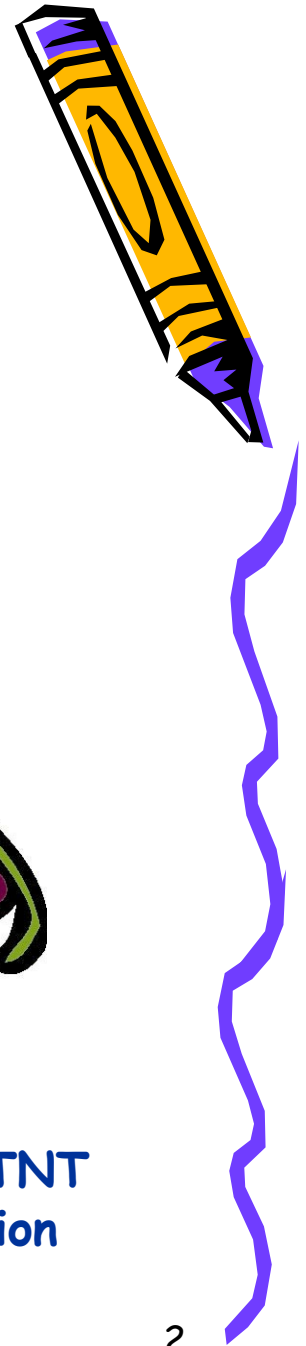


Katie Bark, RD, LN
Montana Team Nutrition Program
Montana State University



What is Recess Before Lunch?

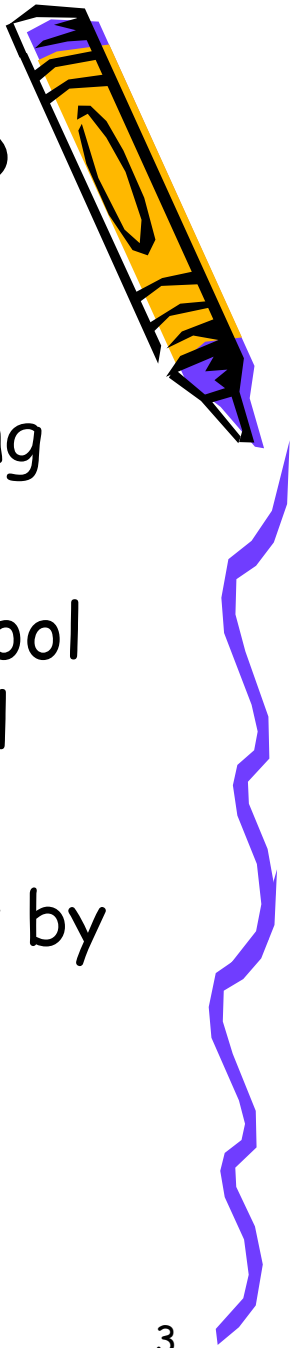
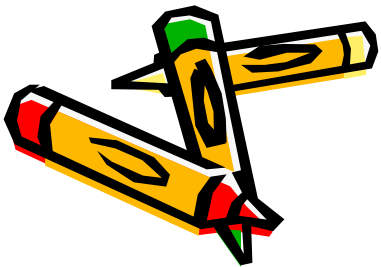
Kids Play,
And Then
Eat!



This project was funded by a USDA 2001 TNT
Grant to Montana Office of Public Instruction

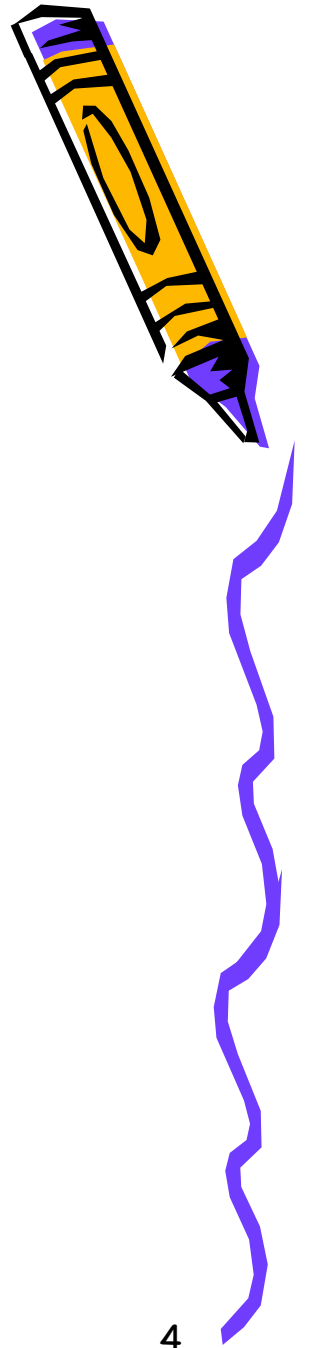
WHY A Montana Pilot Study?

- In order to help create a pleasant eating environment in elementary schools
- In order to decrease food waste in school cafeterias and encourage better overall food intake
- To determine acceptance level of policy by school personnel and students



Methodology

- Four schools were selected based on interest from school principals
 - 1 grade K-8 school
 - 2 grade K-2 schools
 - 1 grade 5-8 middle school
- Three Phases:
 - Phase 1 -Spring 2002 (before RBL)
 - Phase 2 -Fall 2002 (early RBL)
 - Phase 3 -Spring 2003 (RBL)



Methodology

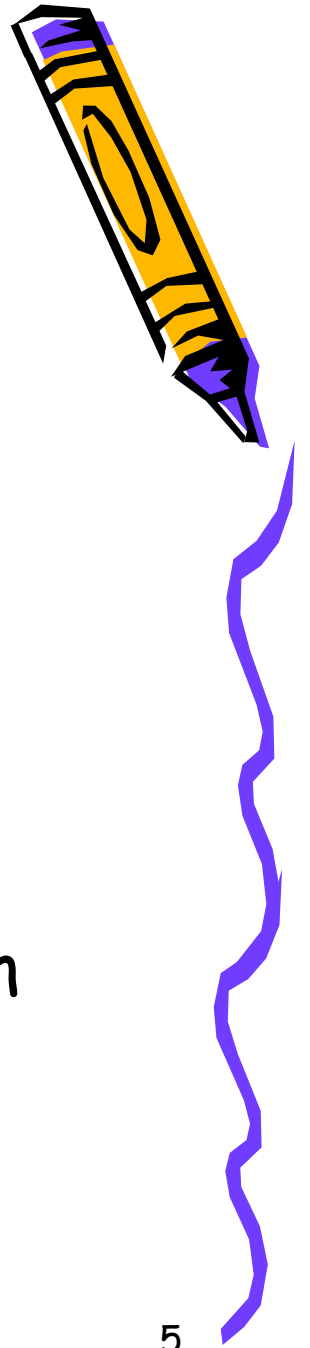
- During each phase data was collected:

Plate waste*(total volume of same meal)

Staff Surveys (adm, teachers, sfs)

Focus Groups with children

*The Grade K-8 school was not included in plate waste study)



Results of Pilot Project

- Plate waste studies have shown that the children waste less food and drink more milk. The decrease in food and milk waste has been dramatic in some cases.

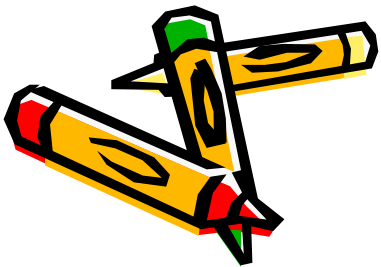
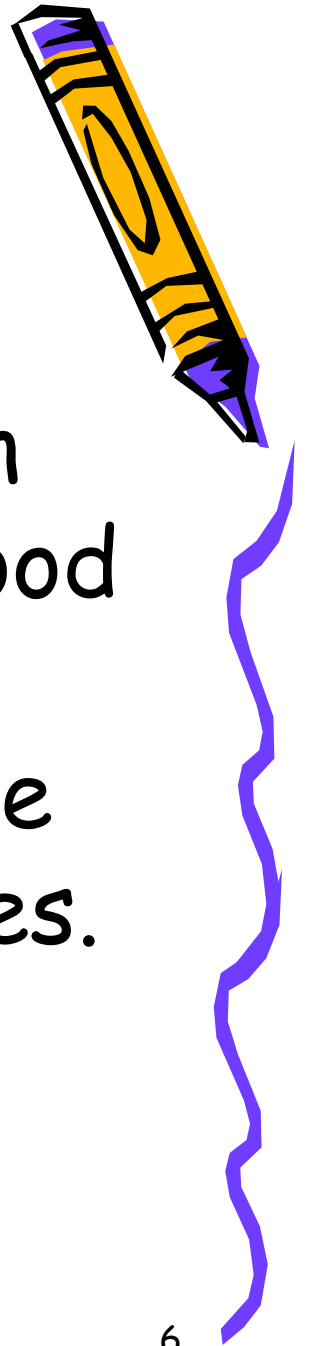
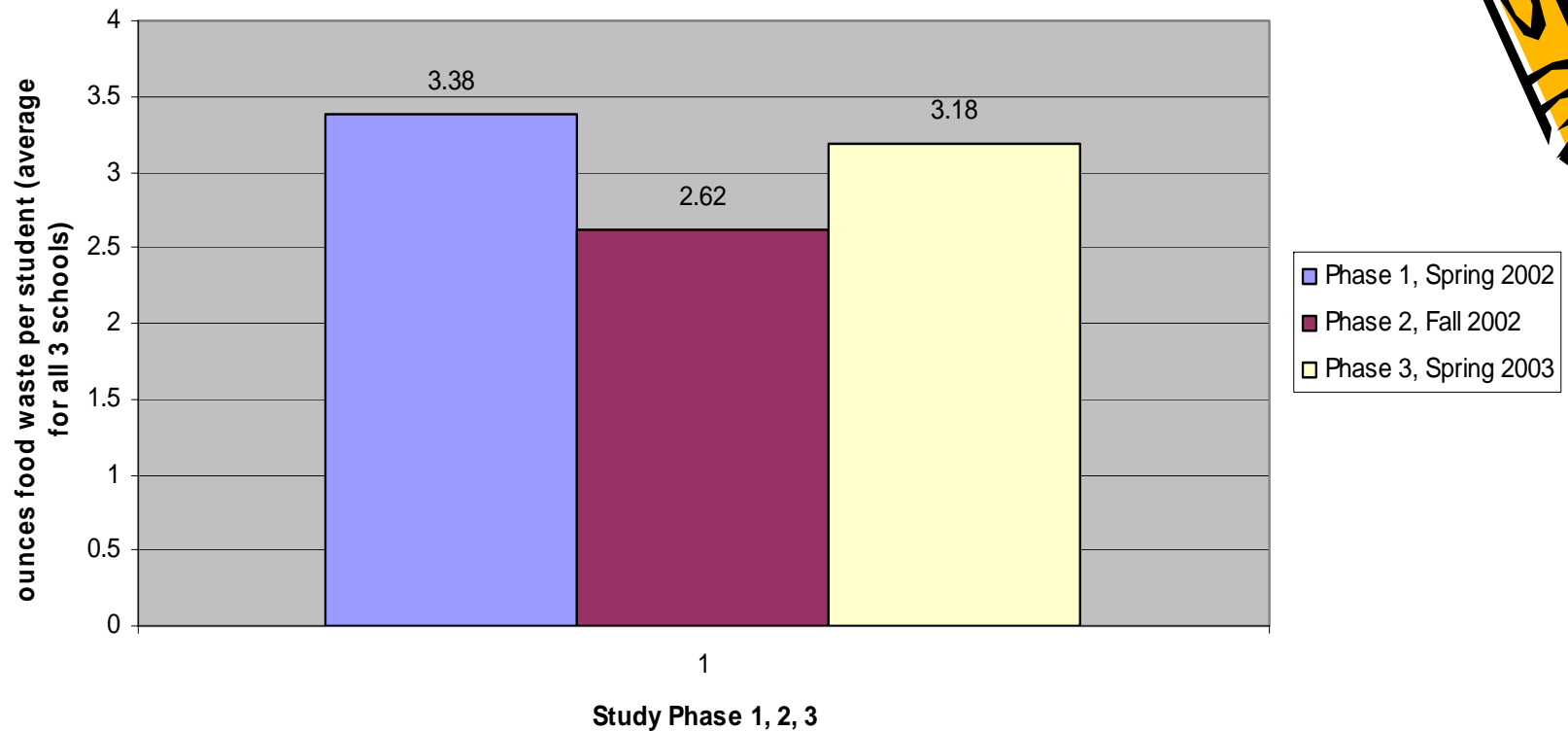


Figure 1: Average Food Waste per Student Decreases

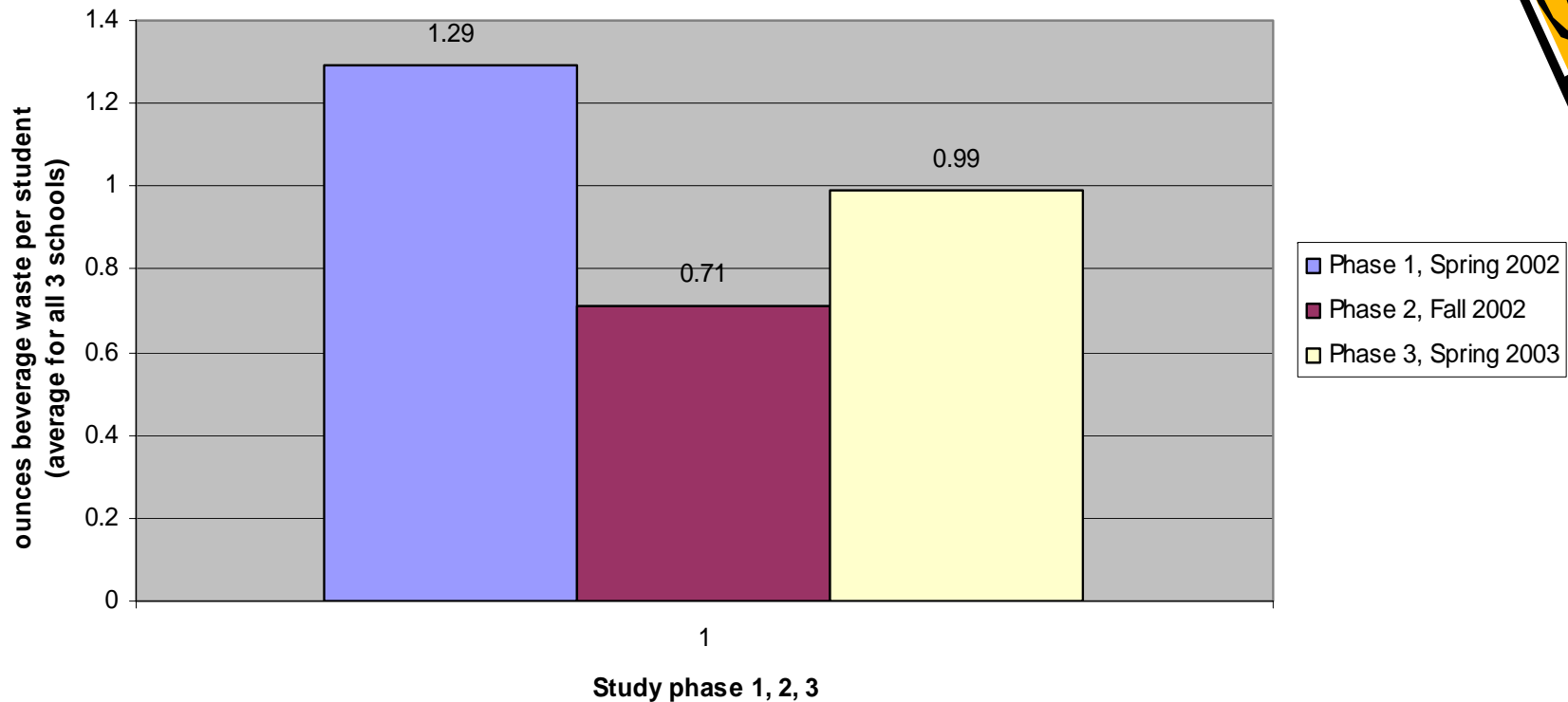


Implications: This study demonstrates the decrease in food waste per student as a result of implementing a Recess Before Lunch policy.

Source: Montana Office of Public Instruction School Nutrition Programs Recess Before Lunch Pilot Study, data from 3 Montana schools, April 2002-May 2003.



Figure 2: Average Beverage Waste per Student Decreases



Implications: This study demonstrates the decrease in beverage waste per student as a result of implementing a Recess Before Lunch policy.

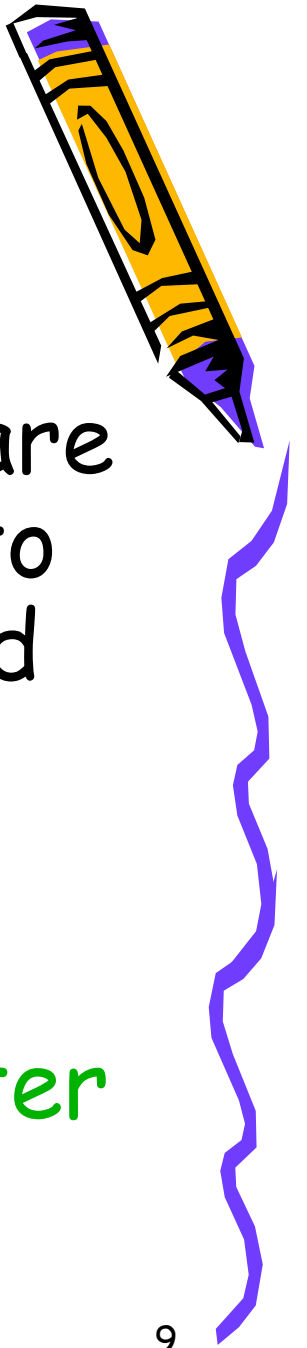
Source: Montana Office of Public Instruction School Nutrition Programs Recess Before Lunch Pilot Study, data from 3 Montana schools, April 2002-May 2003.



Survey Results

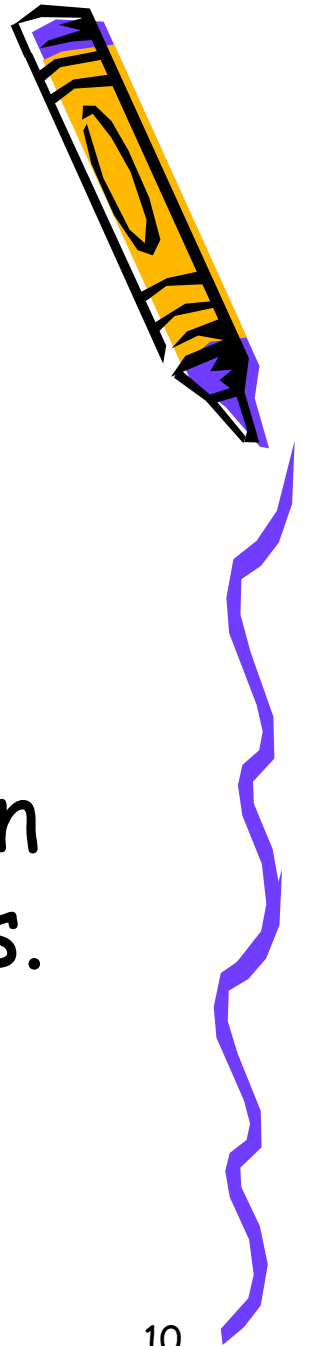
- Teachers note that the kids are more settled upon returning to the classroom after lunch, and ready to start afternoon classes.

" I have 10 more minutes of teaching time in the class after lunch"



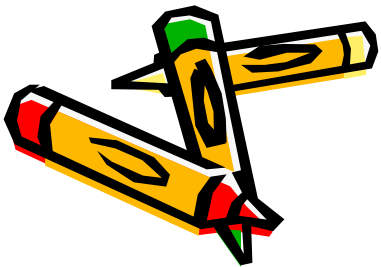
Feedback from Staff

- Principals and teachers also note decreased behavioral problems on the playground, in the lunchroom and in the halls.



Feedback from Staff

- The kids are amazingly quiet and calm in the lunchroom. They are actually eating, while socializing amongst themselves.



Feedback from Pilot Project

- The atmosphere in the lunchroom is more conducive to eating and is much more relaxed, as the kids are not rushing through lunch to get outside.



Quotes from MT Schools

Whitefish Central School, Whitefish, Montana-
Mr. Kim Anderson, Principal

"Benefits that we have seen at Whitefish Central are:

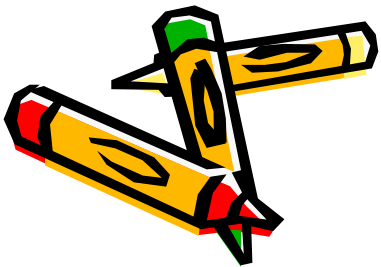
- Less conflict on the playground and in the lunchroom
- Improved behavior in afternoon classes
- Students are eating better and wasting less food"
- "My 5th period teachers love it!"



Quotes from MT Schools

Teachers support the change to RBL for the following reasons:

- "Children are settled down and ready to learn when they return to the classroom."
- "Less fights on the playground and better classroom behavior."



Quotes from MT schools

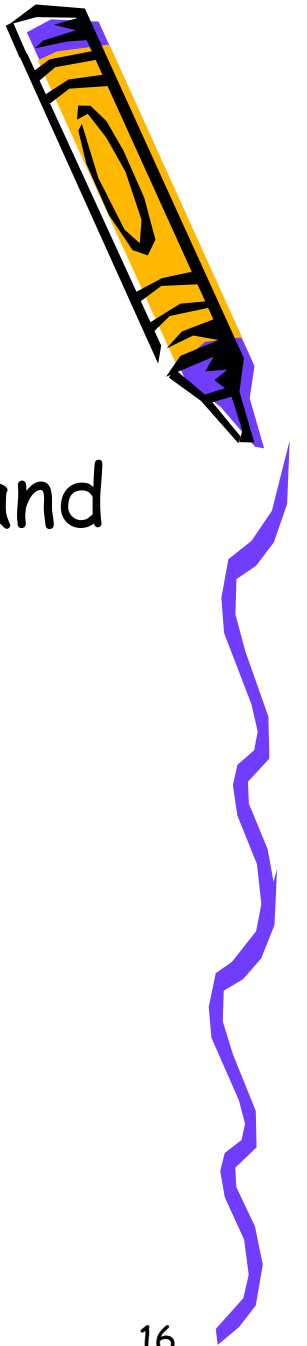
Students report:

- "If you eat lunch before recess, you get a tummy ache."
- "It takes off all your energy, so you're not moving around at lunch."



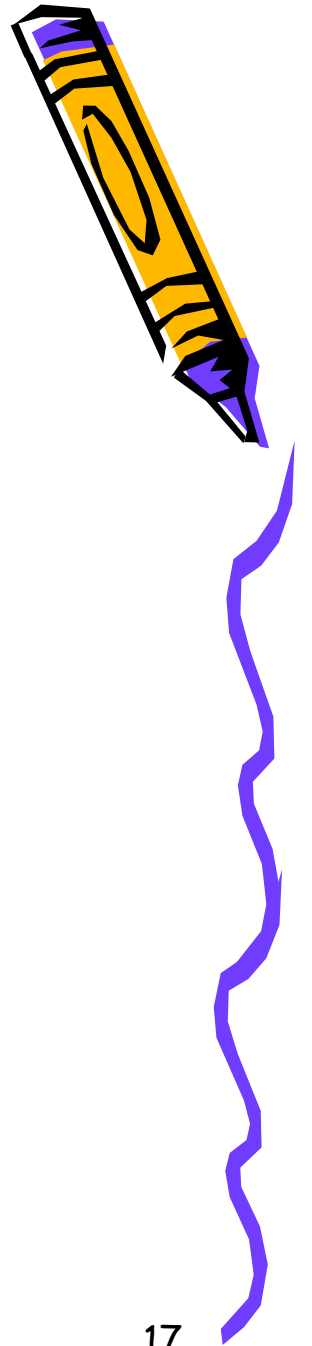
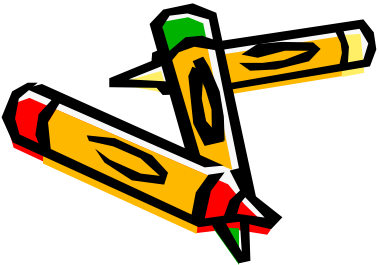
How to start a RBL Policy

- Build support within your school and community.
 - Within the School
 - Educate the Parents
 - Within the Community
 - Educate the Students



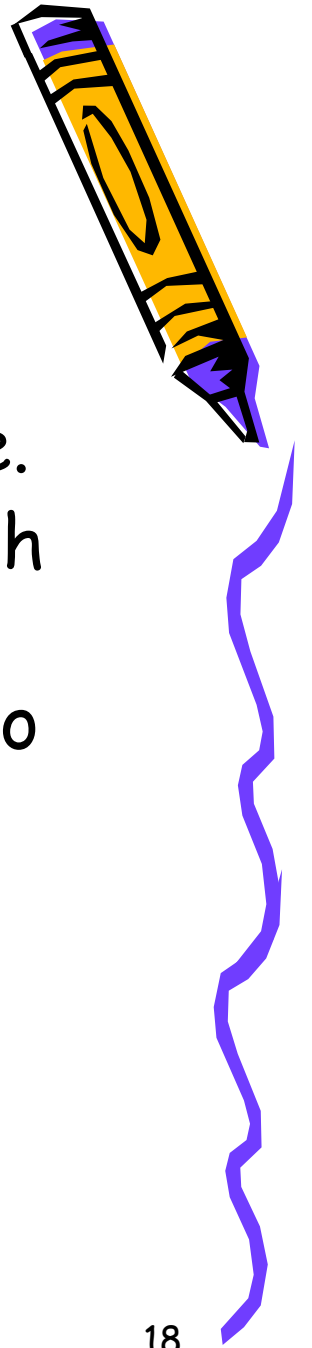
Get Others Involved

T
E
A
MORE!



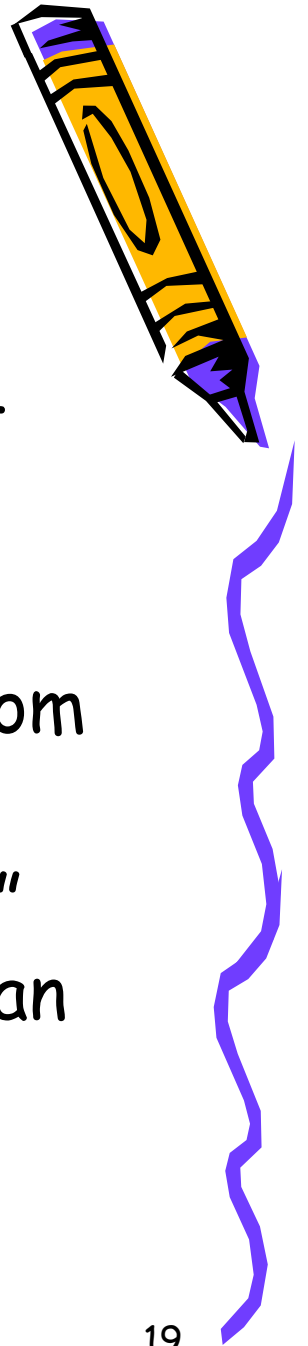
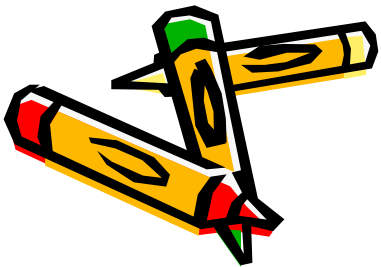
How to start a RBL Policy

- Plan the new recess and lunch schedule.
- Include a hand washing plan in the lunch schedule.
- Allow adequate time for the children to eat lunch.
- Increase the presence of school staff in the lunchroom initially.

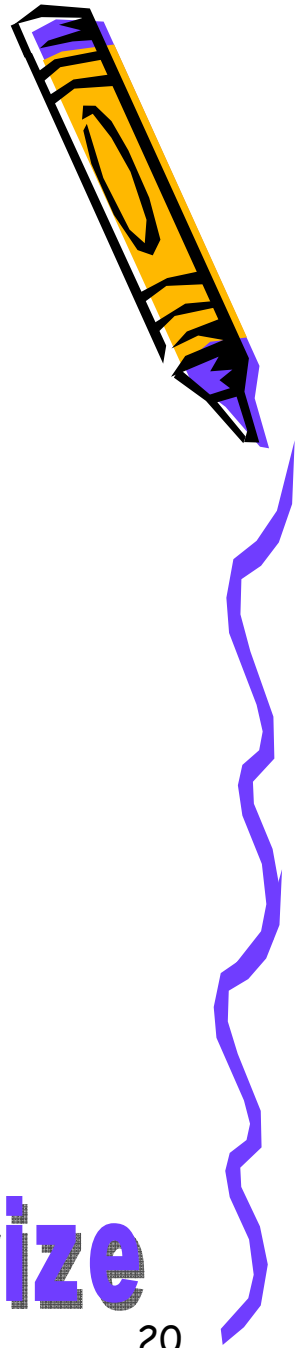


Practical Tips

- Scheduling tends to be the biggest hurdle to overcome. Expect the schedule to be a work in progress.
- Get teachers' input and "buy-in" from the start.
- Younger kids (K-2) tend to "accept" the change in scheduling better than the older kids do initially.



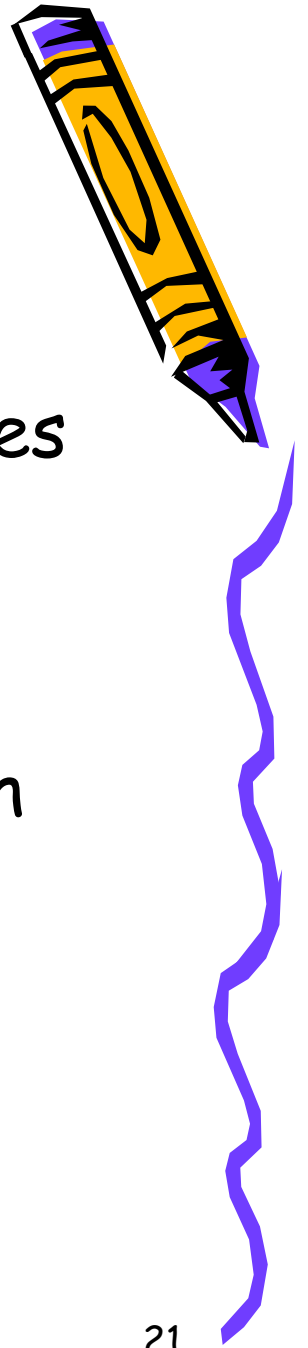
Be Patient!
Remember Change is Hard



Keep Your Eye on the Prize

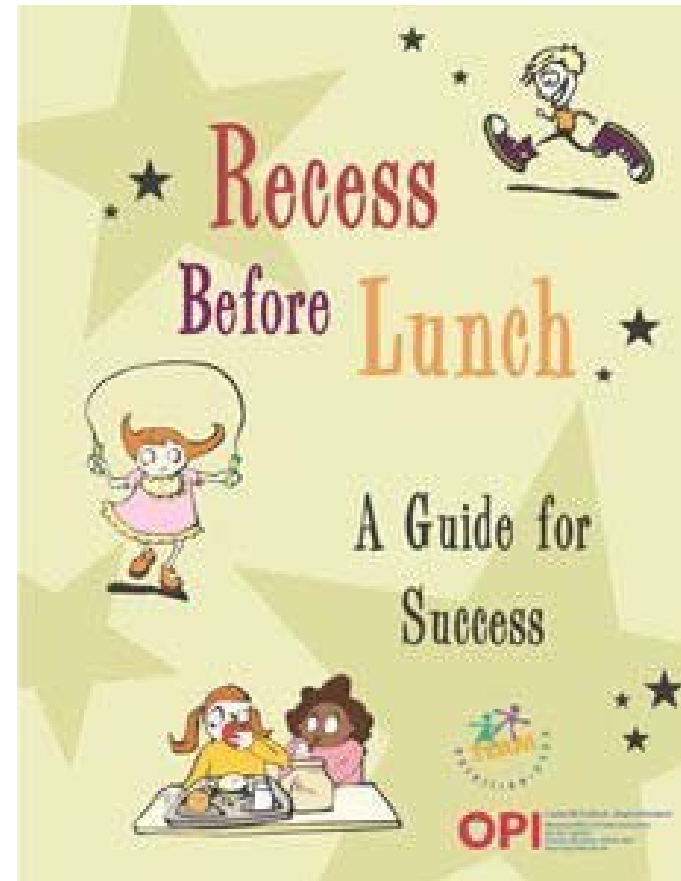
Practical Tips

- Decide where to store cold lunches for easy access.
- Some schools opt to take care of lunch money prior to recess.
- Kids are likely to be hungrier with this change. Schools may opt to offer a mid-morning snack, along with promotion of the school's breakfast program.



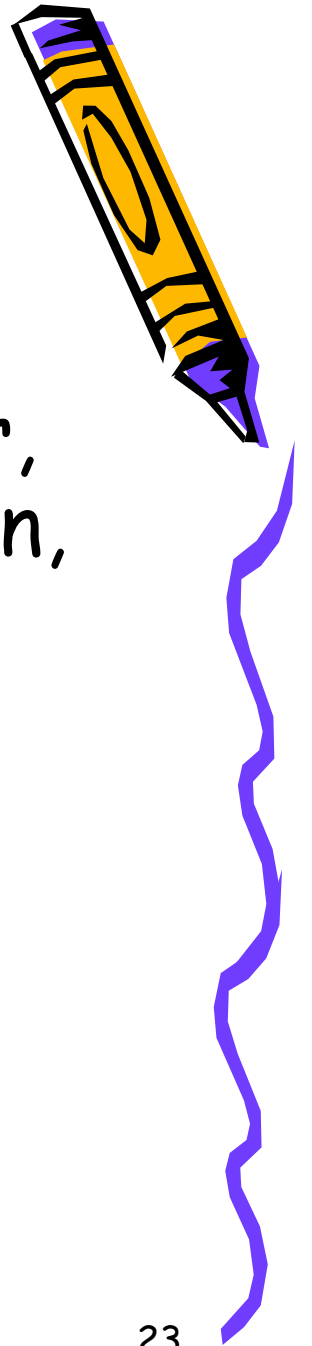
A Recess Before Lunch Implementation Guide

- General Information
- **Implementation Steps**
- Assistance from MT Schools
- Resources
- Pilot Project Report
- **Educational & Marketing Materials**
- Evaluation Form



Guide Includes...

- Marketing materials (parent letter, brochures, PowerPoint presentation, handouts, press release)
- School schedules to consider
- You may request surveys and plate waste instruments from Team Nutrition Program



A Recess Before Lunch Implementation Guide



is available from the Montana Team
Nutrition Program

Access the guide online at:

www.opi.state.mt.us/schoolfood/index.html



Follow Up Survey in 2005

An increase in the number of elementary schools implementing RBL across the state

Benefits are being noted in all but 10% of schools

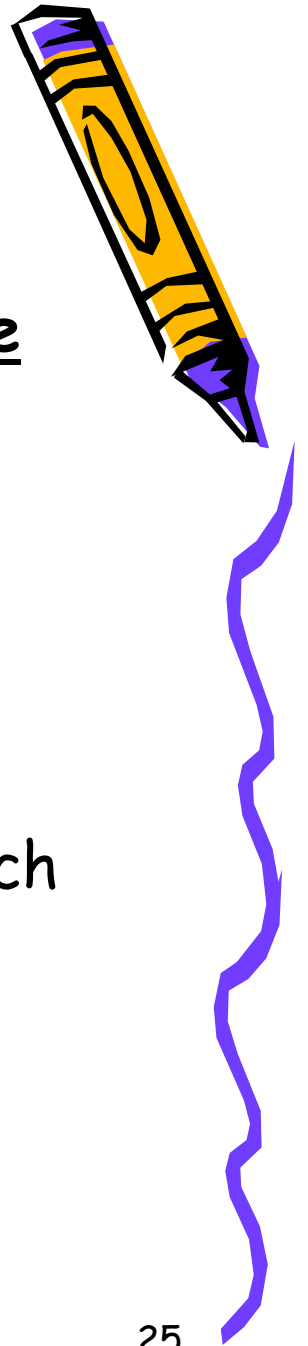
Benefits Include:

Ready to learn after lunch

Eating slower and not rushing through lunch

Improved behavior in playground

More food consumed and less thrown out





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406-994-5641 or
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Katie Bark, RD kbark@mt.gov

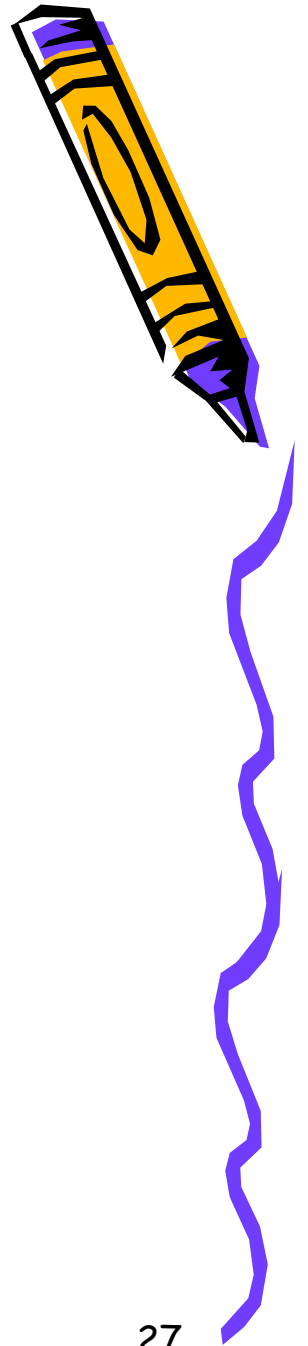
Montana Office of Public Instruction

School Nutrition Programs

Phone 406-444-2501

Chris Emerson, MS, RD-Director

cemerson@mt.gov



In summary, Recess Before Lunch:

- Helps students eat better
- Helps students behave better
- Benefits teachers and school staff
- All of which lead to healthier families, schools and communities!

